ΑΓΑΠΑΙ ΑΣΕΜΟΙ,

OR

The Innocent Love-Feast.

Being a

SERMON

Preached at S. LAWRENCE JURY in *London*, the sixth day of September, *Anno Domini* 1655. On the publick Festival of the County of

HERTFORD;

And published this present May 1656.

By WILLIAM CLARKE.

---

1 Sam. 9. 12, 13.

V. 12. *For* Samuel *came to day to the City, for there is a Feast of the People to day in the High-place:*

V. 13. ——*The People will not eat until he come, because he doth blesse the Sacrifice, and afterwards they eat that be bidden.*

LONDON,

Printed for *William Leake* T[illegible]

[illegible] *in Fleet* S[illegible]

THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS

Providence hath so ordered, that my First-born *should be within my* own Tribe: *which, notwithstanding is a priviledge I truly value, yet I must confesse, the means of obtaining it, are so contrary to my private spirit, that had it not been for those* importunities *which frequently assaulted an* easie nature, *I should rather have chosen to have died* childlesse, *then to have endured the* hazards *and* inconveniences *that attend* posterity *in an* Evil Age: *But having neither* obstinacy *nor* ill manners *enough, to deny the solicitations of my Countrey-men, especially of them that were the* Prime Masters *of that days* Ceremony; *I have at last suffered my self to be* over-ruled *against my own* inclinations: *And now, like a* modest Woman *in her* first *teeming, I am ready to* Blush *at my Burden, and am* affraid *of the dangers of my travail*

vail, being as sufficiently sensible of my own weaknesse, *as of the* affronts *and* rudenesse *of a* Censorious Generation.

Which is a work yet more fearful to my thoughts, when I consider, that by appearing after this *manner to the World,* all *those* blemishes *which might haply be* over-look'd *in the Current of a* swift *delivery, must now be exposed, as* standing objects, *to the view of* Learned, Serious, *and, perhaps, severe* Judges: *Unto which disadvantage I may justly adde also, The* weaknesse *which commonly accompanies a* Dead Letter, *when it is parted from the* life *and* power *of a* Ministerial dispensation; *Especially considering (for my own part) that if I have any* personal endowment *worth the* owning, *I may say without vanity, it lies rather in my* Tongue *then my* Pen, *my* Hand (*like* Jacob *in his disguise*) *being much rougher then my voice.* *All*

All which inconveniences (Dear Countreymen) *I have named upon no other designe, but to let you see, that I value the* Service of my Countrey, *beyond my own* Reputation; *and that there is nothing too hard for me to* grant, *wherein you appear to be the* suiters.

And now if in review of this Meditation, you shall meet with any Doctrine, Precept, *or* Exhortation, *that may enform your* Judgements, *quicken your* Obedience, *or put a fervour into your* Affections, *let this* Little Good *expiate for all the* imperfections *of the* Work, *or* infirmities *of the* Workman; *bearing this in minde, That it will be a very great* disorder *to your* designe, *to be* offended *at a* Feast *of* Love, *and to be* censorious *upon a Subject that pleads for* Kindnesse *and* Forgivenesse. *Let me therefore receive this as the* First-fruits

of

of your Obedience to the Doctrine of Love, *That you can receive with* meekneſſe, *the* plaineſt *truths of Religion; and that you will think any Doctrine well worth the* Printing, *which is worth your* Practiſing; *which as it is the main* End *of all our* Miniſtry, *ſo let it be the* happy effect *of this poor and unworthy* Dedication, *preſented you by the hands of him that is*

From my Study
at *North Crawly*
in *Bucks*. Dec. 10.
1655.

Dear Countrey-men

Yours

in the ſervice of Love

W. CLARKE.

Stewards:

William Thomſon. *John Berresford.* *John Ellis.*

Dr Robert Waller *Robert Briſco.* *Thomas Bateman*

Richard Mead. *Joſeph Sible.* *William Robinſon*

The Innocent Lovē-Feast.

OR,

A Sermon preached at S. *Lawrence* Church in *London* the 6th day of *September*, *Anno Dom.* 1655. On the publick Festival of the County of *Hertford.*

---

1 *Peter* 4. the former part of the 8th Verse.

And above all things have fervent charity among your selves.

THere was no solemn Feast under the Law without a Sacrifice annexed: to shew *Israel*, that, as Gods honour was the end, so Gods Grace and Benediction was the life of all their publick Festivals. And whilest (as the learned Rabbins observe) private or personal Oblations were offered in silence; yet at the publick and solemn Feasts of *Israel*, the sons of *Aaron* ever sounded the silver Trumpets of the Sanctuary. Thus though the Charities and Hospitalities of private Families, are not accompanied with these publick Invocations: yet how decent it is to sound the Trumpets of Gods Sanctuary at the Festivall assembly of a whole Countrey, I need not ask you, who so laudably practise it? And

Chazkuni.

Num. 10. 10. Psal. 81. 3.

seeing

seeing I that am one of the meanest of the sons of *Aaron* am called to this religious Office, it will ill become me on this good day, to sound in your ears the Alarmes of War; but rather, (as best answering the end and designe of this Christian Convocation,) The Triumphs of Peace, and caresses of Christian Charity. Which I cannot perform from a better hand nor in better words, then in this pregnant Exhortation of the Apostle, now read unto you. *And above all things have fervent charity among your selves.*

The *Contexture* of which words with the precedent and following verses is not easie to be discerned; yet upon diligent observation, we may finde this Chapter to be a compleat *Platform* or Scheme of the whole course of a Christian, through which he must run in this life; even from his new birth, to the goal of his death and dissolution; for so it begins, and so it ends. The first steps he takes in this Race, are in the duties of Mortification, which is that *Suffering in the flesh*, mentioned in the fifth verse. Not meant of the *Outward suffering* in the Body by distresses or persecutions; for these sufferings are towards the end of the Chapter, where he speaks of the *Fiery Trial, &c.* But the *Suffering of the flesh* is here the *inward suffering*, and *bringing the body into subiection* (as *S. Paul* speaks) by duties of mortification; the effect whereof is a *negative holinesse* or *ceasing from sin*, which he enlargeth to verse 7. *It sufficeth that we have spent the time past of our life in wantonnesse, lusts, excesse of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries, &c.*

1 Cor. 9. 27.

Now although this ceasing from sin and *negative holinesse* may carry us along the *former part* of our journey, through the duties of mortification; yet after this progresse made, we must hasten towards the *End*, by a motion of another nature, to wit, not only of *Mortification*, but of *Vivification*; not onely *ceasing to do evil*, but *learning to do well*, by encreasing spiritual graces in us, in all their variety and excellency; unto all which the Apostle speakes from ver. 7. to the end of the Chapter. Exhorting to the practise of holy duties: *For* (saith he ver. 7.) *now the end is at hand*, ye are

Isa. 1. 16.

not

not in the beginning of your journey, and therefore you must not rest onely in *Ceasing from sin*; for the end is at hand, therefore you must *do* good and holy duties, of *Sobriety* and *Piety*, verse 7. *Be sober and watch unto prayer*; of *Love* ver. 8. *Above all things have love or charity*; of *Hospitality* verse 9. *Be harborours one to another*; of ministring mutual *Consolation* and *Instruction* verse 10. *As every man hath received the gift, so let him minister, as good Stewards of the manifold grace of God*; and verse 11. *If any speak, let him speak as the Oracles of God----that God in all things may be glorified*; of *Constancy* under persecutions, from verse 12. to the end of the Chapter, *Think it not strange concerning the fiery tryal*; verse 16. *If any man suffer as a Christian let him not be ashamed*; verse 17. *Judgement must begin at the house of God, &c.* And lastly of the *ultimate resignation* even of their soules in suffering for Gods cause, verse the last, *Let them that suffer according to the will of God, commit their soules to him in well doing, as unto a faithful Creator.*

And thus you have seen how this Chapter containes an exact *platform* of a Christians race; in which my Text points at one of those *good duties*, which the Apostle requires, of them that are not onely to *cease from sin*, but to *work righteousness*, and that not of the least account neither; for after duties of *sobriety* and *piety* it comes in with a *But*, Πρὸ πάντων δὲ, *But above all things have fervent charity among your selves.*

Which (if we may make *Divisions* in a Text *of Love*,) may be divided into *Four Parts*: 1. Here is the *Duty it self* enjoyned, and that is Love or Charity, *Have Charity*. 2. Here is the *Importance* of that Duty, Πρὸ πάντων, *Above all things have charity*. 3. Here is the *Qualification* or *Complexion* of that Duty, Ἀγάπην ἐκτενῆ, translated, *Fervent Charity*. 4. Here is the *Reciprocation* of that Duty, εἰς ἑαυτοὺς, *Among your selves. But above all things have fervent charity among your selves.*

First the *Duty* it self enjoyned is Love or Charity, *Have Charity*: which is not in this place 1. That *Cardinal* Grace (as I may so call it) so highly extold by S. *Paul* 1 *Cor.* 13. which abideth in Heaven even after *Tongues*, and *Prophesies*, and *Knowledge* shall fail, and which is preferr'd before *Hope*,

and *Faith* it self; which in that place, is a comprehensive name, including in it the perfection of all Graces and Duties both towards *God*, and towards our *Neighbour*, in which respect it is said *Ro.*13.10. That *Love is the fulfilling of the law.* Neither Secondly, is this Love onely and meerly a *Moral Love*, arising from a complacency in a present good, found in Heathens and Unbelievers, and meer Natural Men, mentioned by our Saviour *Matth.* 5.46. *If ye love them, that love you, what reward have you? do not even the Publicans the same?* which is a *Natural affection* and not a *Christian grace*, a *Humane passion* and not a *Religious duty*. Neither Thirdly is this Charity a bare *Eleemosynary Charity*, of Almes and Good deeds, which in a strict sense is usually called Charity, by attributing the *inward affection* of the minde to the *outward action* of the hand; mentioned 3 *John* 6.

But this Charity in my Text is a *Divine grace* and a Religious duty, whereby we are to extend our bowels of love and Christian compassion one towards another, not under the *narrow relations* of *Kindred*, *Friends*, or *Benefactors*, but unto *all* in the common capacity of Religion, and that not upon any humane or natural designes, which love is meerly a moral passion; but onely for *Pious and Christian ends* and considerations; which turns Nature into Grace, and a Humane Passion into a Christian Affection.

Which being thus described unto us from the *Original*, the *Object*, and the *End*, by treating briefly of each of them apart, you will know sufficient of the whole duty it self.

And First for the *Original* of Christian love; It is the grace of Gods holy Spirit: Indeed *Love* 1. As it is *a passion of the Soul*, ariseth meerly from *Nature*; which is an affection placed originally in Man by the great Creator, whereby he takes complacency and content in the good things of the Creature which God hath made for him, without which all the blessings of this life were but in vain created, and were no more delicious to Man then to a Stock or Stone: That the pleasant acceptation therefore of all Gods good things might not be lost, did he indue Man with this natural affection of Love. But Love as it 2. is an *inordinate passion* ariseth not

from

from *Nature Qua talis*, but as corrupted and depraved *by Sin*, whereby the soul is *Præter institutum naturæ*, carried beyond the mediocrity of natural appetite towards the creature, and created blessings. While Man only loved the *Creature*, according to the Law of *Nature*, and *God*, according to the Law of *God*; then he loved it in a mean and in a moderate subordination, to the love of God; who was to be loved with all our *Might*, *Heart*, and *Strength*. But when as by sinne Mans heart forsook his God, then that earnest and zealous love *Ad ultimum posse* before bestowed upon the Almighty, was irregularly added to that mean and moderate Fountain of love of the Creature according to the Law of Nature; which great addition coming to the force of natural love, makes the soules of all corrupt unregenerate men run over their old banks towards the Creature, in a most inordinate measure and a most irregular manner, loving the Creature from two violent *inforcements*, one from *Nature*, the other from *Lust*.

Wherefore to endeavour to reform this violent passion, only by *Precepts of Morality*, or Rules of *Depraved Reason*, or the like Philosophick aides, will prove as great a folly, as to set obstacles in the midst of a strong torrent to prevent Inundation: they may perhaps give a check for a time, and make lust suspend a while the actual exercise of her inordinacy; but in the mean while she gathers strength, and will, as soon as ever those violent restraints be remitted (which cannot be perpetual) overflow our soules with the greater flood of concupiscence, and carry our hearts without possibility of resistance down the stream from God towards the World. So that there is no means left to weaken *this torrent*, and to keep it within its due limits, but by dealing with the Fountain; the *Heart* must be changed and renewed, and the inclinations and desires of our soules must be altered, which thing is neither in the power of *Nature*, nor *Reason*, but only *of the grace of Gods Spirit* to effect, which is able to re-inkindle that religious love in our hearts, with which Man at first loved both God and his Brother: which was the ground of S. *Johns* exhortation, 1 Ep. 4.7,8. *Let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God; God is love*, ver. 8.

The

The original then of this religious love is Gods grace, which is the *first part* of the description.

Secondly, consider the *Object* of this love, which is said in the description to be extended, not onely to *Kindred*, *Friends*, or *Benefactors*, but unto *All* in the capacity and latitude of Religion. The *generick* Object of all love is one and the same, and that is a *present good* either *real* or *appearing*: the vilest wretch yet never loved evil *Sub ratione mali*, not as evil, but at least under the appearance of good: But the *Specifick* Objects are vastly different, nay, to shew the wonderful power of Grace over Nature, their Objects are contrariant, and directly opposite one to another, *Matth.* 5.43,44. *In old time it was, thou shalt love thy Neighbour, and hate thy Enemy*; this is the voice of Nature, and of the Old Man in the old time; But I say unto you, verse 44. which is the voice of Grace and Christ, *Love your enemies, blesse them that curse you, and do good to them that hate you.* Hence is it that the Scripture makes no difference in Offices of love and mutual relief, between *Friend* and *Foe*; but he that in one Precept is called our *Enemy*, in the recital of the *same* Precept in another place is called *our Brother*, and both to be loved and served alike, as appears *Exod.* 23. 4. compared with *Deut.* 22.1. In one place it is, *If thine enemies Ox or his Asse go astray, thou shalt surely bring it back*: in the other, which is the recital of the same Law, it is, *Thou shalt not see thy brothers Ox or his Asse go astray, but thou shalt in any case bring him back*: So that, whether he be *Enemy*, or *Brother*, it is all one in the eye of Religion, and both to be alike beloved, assisted, and relieved.

Which although it be very severe to Nature, yet the Christian Law of love requireth it at our hands, never seeking to *comply* with, but to *over-rule* all our unregenerate affections; in so much that a new man at his first conversion is in nothing more an *Ephraimite*, like a young *Heifer* unaccustomed and strugling under the *Yoke of Grace*, then in respect to those impulsions and checks which *Gods Spirit* imposeth upon mans *Affections*: For indeed if you observe the Law of Grace and the Gospel; this contrariety is not found only in this *one* affection of *Love*; but all the rest of the passions, by the

the power and constraint of Grace, are not only *diverted* but *inverted*, & turned cleer backward in their motions to objects diametrically opposite to their former. Thus for our *Hatred*, *We must hate Father and Mother, and Wife, and Children, and Brethren, & Sisters, and our own lives also, or we cannot be Christs Disciples, Luke* 14.26. Next for our *Joy*, *We must joy in persecutions, reproaches, calamities, and be exceeding glad, Mat.* 5. 13. Nay, *Leap for joy* (σκιρτήσατε is Christs word in S. *Luke* chap. 6.23.) *when men hate you and reproach you*; and so in all the rest. Which although it may seem to be a very sharp usage of Nature, yet is it not without sufficient reason and abundant compensation; in regard that by vertue of the divine *Chimistry* of Grace, *Good*, even *spiritual* good is brought out of *natural evils*; according to *S. Pauls* word of consolation, *Rom.*8.28. *We know that all things work together for good to them that love God.* Even enemies, reproaches, and persecutions. Which is a Paradox to Nature, because it is beyond her *Ken* or *Comprehension*: the *Back* cannot feel any good in *cold* and *nakednesse*, nor the *Belly* in *hunger* and *emptinesse*: and on the other side, they cannot apprehend there is any *Evil* in *food* and *raiment*; and as they *judge*, so they love and so they hate: But Grace comes and findes *Wantonnesse* in *fulnesse of bread*; and *Pride* in *gorgeous apparel*: and on the other side, it findes *Humility* in *rags*; *Chastity*, in *hunger* and abstinence; it findes *Patience* under *afflictions*; triumphs under persecutions; and thus they work together for the good of them that love God. And thus much of the *Object*.

Thirdly, consider the *End* of Christian charity, which is said in the Description to be, *Not upon any humane or natural designe, but for pious and Christian ends and considerations.* There are three *Stages* of all Mans actions, *Himself*, his *Brother*, and his *God*. Now 1. to love meerly for a mans *own good*, and upon *self interest*, is basely *Carnal*, nay 'tis *Ethnick*; *Do not even*, the Heathen, *the Publicans the same*? Nay, 'tis Brutish, for the Beasts love their Feeder for his food; but if he withholds his hand, and hunger begins to gripe those Savages, *Exasperatur mitigata torvitas*, they flye in his face that nourished them, and make a prey of their Benefactor. And, 1.

econdly,

2. Secondly, to love our Brother meerly for our *Brothers* sake, at best is but *moral*, in which respect though Man even under depravation excels the bruit Beasts, whose love (if I may so call it) reacheth no further then the first sort, loving all things as they are agreeable or serviceable to their own sensitive appetites: whereas this *moral love* in Man, admits not of such mean mercenary reflections, and is bestowed upon no other considerations then the goodnesse, vertue, and merit of the person beloved, as a debt due to his worth & goodness, which is the love of Philosophers, and that which is called *Amor Amicitiæ* or *Benevolentiæ*; the love of Friendship and Good-will: yet is this love as far below the duty of the Text, and the affection of true Christians, as it is above the lust of Beasts and brutish Men. Thirdly therefore, there is another
3. sort of love which is neither for our *own sakes*, nor *our Brothers*, but for *Gods sake*, and that not only in obedience to Gods *Commandment* of love, which is the Evangelick Law, and the *New Command*; nor for the conservation of the peace of *Gods Church*, which is fortified by love; but also and principally, when it is bestowed in consideration of that *spiritual relation* which our Brethren by grace have to God, as instruments of his praise, as *Members*, or as *Ministers* of his Church; as parts of the *houshold of faith*, &c. This is to love our Brother for *Gods* sake: Or in our Saviours phrase, when
Mat.10.41,42 we love a *Disciple* in *the name* of a *Disciple*, and a *Prophet* in the *name* of a *Prophet*, and a *righteous* Man in the *name* of a *righteous* man. That is, when we love them under that relation in which they stand towards God and Religion, which ought to be so predominant in every good heart, that it should give *Law* and *Rule* to all *inferior relations* whatsoever, whether *Natural* or *Moral*; in so much that if ever their interests stand in *opposition*, these subordinate indeerments ought to be utterly superseded and neglected, which is the reason our *Saviour* saith, That *unlesse we hate father and mother, &c. we cannot be his Disciples.* There are but *three* sorts of inferior indeerments imaginable: Either the *natural* endearments of *Blood*; *Moral* of *Friendship*; or *Politick* endearments of neighbourhood, and commerce: and, as if the *Holy Ghost* had

had designed to shew at once, the supremacy of this *spiritual* endearment of *God* and *Religion* above them all, I finde all these *Three* expresly superseded in *one verse* for the Interest of Religion and Honour of God, *Exod.* 32.27. When the people sinned in the matter of the *Golden Calf*, *Moses* from God required the sons of *Levi* to gird every Man his sword to his side, and *Slay every man his* Brother, *every man his* Companion, *and every man his* Neighbour. Every Man his *Brother*, there's the *natural* endeerment of *Blood*; every Man his *Companion*, there's the moral endeerment of *Friendship*; and every Man his *Neighbour*, there's the *politick* endeerment of *Neighbourhood* or *Commerce*, and all to be superseded for the interest of *God* and *Religion*. Neither yet is our profession (composed of such severe Precepts) to be called either *Cruel* or *Unnatural*: Because this *Supreme* and *Divine* Relation doth not *cancel* and *destroy* those that are inferiour, but only *suspends* their vertue and influence, like the *Star* in the presence of the *Sun*, they *are* though they *appear not*; and so soon as ever this *Ruling light* of *Religion* is withdrawn, and the Interest of *Gods glory* is not concerned to the contrary, then have these *lesser* inducements their proper and allowable light and influence upon our affections: which is the reason why that *Rigid* passage in *S. Luke*, which seems to require an utter *stifling* of natural affection, in *S. Matthew* pleads only for a *qualifying* and *subjecting* it to *Religion*; and whilest Christ saith in the one Evangelist; that *Unlesse we* Hate *Father and mother, &c. we cannot be his Disciples*, he saith in the other Evangelist, *He that loveth father and mother* more *then me is not worthy of me*, pleading for no more but a due preference of *Religion* before *Nature*: Like holy *Abrahams* love to his son, which, whether it was the love of *Nature* or *Religion*, he knew not so well, as he did, when God put that severe command upon him, of offering his dear son; and by that ready submission his heart yielded to the will of God, he knew assuredly he loved his childe, not so much with the *fondnesse* of *nature*, as with the true *affection of Religion*, and in subordination to God and his Honour. And if God, at any time, in mercy denies us these costly trials, and

Cha. 14. v. 26
Cha. 10. v. 37.

will

will not shew us what is our love of our Children, Brethren, or Friends, by the losse of them, there is yet a lesse *chargeable* way to try the *truth* of *our love*, and that is by *our anger*. Doest thou conceive a *Religious displeasure* against thy Brother, when thou seest him run into sin, and dishonour God, and break his Lawes, even then when all *other considerations* hold out as amiable as ever? then if thy *Anger* be religious, its a great signe such is thy *Love* also. But on the contrary, Art thou not more angry with him, for denying thee a *reasonable courtesie* at thy need, or for doing thee some *conceived injury*, or revealing some *intrusted secret*, or the like; then for being *drunk*, or *profaning* Gods Sabbath, or *blaspheming* Gods Name, or for *violating* Gods Ordinances? if so, its an evident signe that this Love is but Carnal, and not that heavenly and divine affection which ownes no end or consideration above that supreme end and interest of *God and Religion*; which is the last Branch of the description of this Duty, to wit, the *End* of our *Charity*, not for our *own sakes*, nor for our *Brothers*, but for *Gods sake*.

So that (to reunite that description we have thus dismembred, that we may see the full nature of this duty in one Prospect) we learn from what hath been spoken; First, for the *Original*, That true Christian Love is a stream derived not from the *lower* springs of *Nature*, nor *lowest* of *Lust*, but from the *upper* springs of Gods grace. Secondly, For its *Object*, That this stream must not only water the pleasant Medows, and fruitful Valleys; but must also glide upon hard Rocks, and barren and unsavoury Bogs: For we must love our *Enemies*, and do good to them that *hate us*, and pray for them that *despightfully use us*. And Thirdly, for it its *End*: we learn first, That as this current of Divine Love of our Brother, must have no *Back Stream*, no *Mercenary Reflections* upon our own interest, for this is basely Carnal: And as, Secondly, it must not pour it self solely and finally into our Brothers bosome for his *own* sake; for this is a Cistern of our own hewing, and will hold no water when God accounts with us, it being at best but moral. So Thirdly we learn, That as Water *In tantum ascendit, in quantum prius descendit*,

it

it riseth exactly as high in the Conduit as it fell from the Fountain; even so true Christian love, as it is a stream derived from *Gods grace*, so it must end in *Gods glory* and for *Gods sake*: which is the full nature of Christian Love, the *Duty it self* enjoyned in this Text; *Above all things have charity.*

But Secondly it is not more lovely and heavenly in its *Nature*, then considerable in its *Importance*, for so saith the Text, *Above all things* have charity: Whether we consider it in its *Precedence* or *Preheminence*, both evidently intimated from the difference between the Latine and English in the translation of the Original: Πρὸ πάντων *Ante omnia* saith the Latine, *Before all things have charity*,; There's the *Precedent* of the Duty: Πρὸ πάντων, *Above all things* saith the English, there's the *Preheminence*, both speak the importance of it.

First, Πρὸ πάντων, *Before* all things have charity. The love of our Brethren is a *precedent and preparatory Grace*, that puts the Heart into a fit temper to receive all other graces and instilments of Gods Spirit, and also to perform all other Duties and offices of Religion. *Tria sunt omnia*, these *All things* here of a Christians duty, are either such as relate *to our selves*, or such as relate *to our God*, or such as relate *to our Neighbour*; (there cannot be named a Fourth) comprehended under the three titles of *Sobriety*, *Piety*, and *Charity*. The Apostle exhorts to the practice of the *two first* Duties in the 7. verse; Be *sober*, watch unto *prayer*; but by a religious ἐπανόρθωσις, as if he had forgot himself, he seems to correct his mistake with a *But* as in the Original, πρὸ πάντων δὲ. But before *sobriety* and *Piety*, that is, Before *all* things have charity. Titus 2.12.

First, *Before Sobriety*. We cannot perform our duties to our *own selves* as we ought, nor acquire nor preserve that Christian calme temperature and due consistence of our own spirits, before we first allay the stormes of variance, discord, and injustice towards our Brethren. *Patience*, and *Temperance*, and *Meekneſſe*, and *Humility*, and *Contentation*, and the like, are all *Domestick graces*, that constantly keep house in ordering the private and particular affairs of our soules: *Justice* and *Charity* are *publick graces* that walk abroad in ordering our affections, and conversations towards our Brethren: and

 truly

truly if we practice instead of Justice and Charity, Oppression, Malice, and Revenge towards our Brethren; our soules can enjoy no more inward and domestick peace in respect to the other graces of Sobriety under such publick oppressions and revenges, then a private family can expect in the midst of a Civil War; the publick blood, and violence, and rapine upon the innocent in City and Countrey, take away all the quiet and security from a mans own house: and it is no otherwise with a mans soul in respect to his Brother, if he once raiseth the *Stormes* of wrath in his heart, he must expect *Fluctuations* and *Fomings* upon the waters; and therefore Πρὸ πάντων do as Christ did. First, rebuke the *windes*, and then the *Sea* will soon be calm. First allay thy tempestuous spirit towards thy Brother by the duty of Love and Charity, and then thou maist expect all the tranquil graces of sobriety in thy own soul: Patience, Meeknesse, Temperance, Contentation, and Humility, are gentle graces that grow only under the Wind and Sun, the tempests and blusterings between Brethren soon wither them. How did *Ahabs* choler against *Naboth* turn his *own* stomach? *He could not eat bread*, saith the Text, he was sick because he was angry, and he lost his love and his health together: And truly as was this natural effect of wrath in him, such is the spiritual effect of it in every Man; it turns the uncharitable Mans soul into a distemper, and as to those private and personal graces of sobriety, his constitution is thereby clearly altered, being truly (as we may say) soul-sick, verifying the Wise mans Proverb in a spiritual sence, *Prov.* 14.30. *That envie is the rottennesse of the bones*; so was it with *Ahab* naturally, so is it with every malicious Man spiritually; it rots his soul, and corrupts and poysons all his domestick graces of sobriety: that whilest he endeavours to work vengeance on his Brother, by the violence of his own impetuous spirit, he disquiets and distempers, and therefore destroyes his own soul. As the Philosopher said of *Charybdis*, that it was *Ipsius maris naufragium, & quis ibi salvus ubi ipsum mare perit*, a Gulf, where the waters moved with such violence, that it seemed to be a shipwrack of the Sea it self; and what ship can be safe there, where the Sea it self is drownd?

1 Kings 21.4.

and

and truly such is the violence of the malicious spirit; it is *Ipsius animæ naufragium*, a torrent so violent, that it is a shipwrack to it self, shattering and destroying him that would destroy his Brother: if therefore thou wouldest have thy own soul prosper in the personal graces of sobriety, let thy spirit glide gently in all Offices of Love and Charity towards thy Brother. This is the *first*, Πρὸ πάντων, Before all things, that is, Before all duties of *Sobriety* have Charity.

Secondly, Πρὸ πάντων, Before all things, that is, Before all duties of *Piety*, *watch unto prayer*, verse 7. *But before all things have charity.* I need name no other place of Scripture for proof, but that very expresse doctrine of our Saviour in his Sermon upon the Mount, *Matth.*5.24. *If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remember thy Brother hath ought against thee, leave there thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way*, First, *be reconciled to thy Brother, and then come and offer thy gift:* Forbear to tread in Gods Sanctuary, and to approach his Altars, until thou comest with feet shod with peace; all sacrifices without this grace are like *Cains* that slew his Brother, a stink in Gods nostrils.

Its a proper trophy to bring *Goliahs* sword into Gods house, 1 *Sam.*21.9. The spoyles of Gods and his Churches incorrigible enemies, are matter of triumph and praise to God in the great Congregation: But to hang our *Brothers* sword over Gods Altar, and to bring evil dispositions of malice and revenge against *our Brother*, when we come to crave mercy for *our selves*, what an unwarrantable presumption is this? and how expressly and sadly do we sue for our own condemnation, whilest we pray, that *God would forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive them that trespasse against us?* First therefore be reconciled, then come and offer thy gifte: And in the Apostles order, *Heb.* 12.14. *Follow peace*, and then *holinesse*; first, Peace with thy neighbour, then Holiness to thy God. Malice is such a *Sowre Leaven* that it sowres the whole lump of Religious Duties; purge out *first* therefore that Old Leaven, and then thy Hearing, and Reading, thy Meditations, and thy Prayers, and all will be according to the preparation of the Sanctuary: Which is the reason

S. Peter

S. *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* 3.7. exhorts Husband and Wife, to that degree of mutual love, correspondence, and cohabitation, *That their prayers be not hindred.* And if I should say that even *Martyrdom* it self were but a vainglorious blaze, and a fruitlesse fool-hardinesse without *Love*, I should say no more then *S. Paul* hath said before me, 1 *Cor.*13.3. *If I give my body to be burned and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.*

God spake the same thing in Analogy to holy *David*, 1 *Chron.* 22. 8, 9, 10. when he told him that he should *not build* Gods house, *because he had shed much blood, and made great warres*; but his son shall be a Man of peace, his name shall be *Solomon* (*peaceable*) and he must build Gods house; If God would not esteem his material Temple well built by hands dipt in blood, can we imagine he will accept of the spiritual and most sacred Duties of Religion and Divine Worship performed with a *heart* stained with malice and revenge? He that is acceptably conversant in these holy things, must be a *Solomon*, a Man of peace and love towards his Brethren: therefore again, first, be reconciled before thou buildest Gods house, *Watch unto prayer*, but before this, and *before all things have Charity.* Thus you have seen how Charity goes before both duties of *Sobriety* towards our selves, and duties of *Piety* towards God, which is the *first part* of the importance of the duty, to wit, the *Precedency* of it, gathered from the Latine translation of the Original πρὸ πάντων, *Before* all things have charity.

Secondly, come we to the other part of its Importance, to wit, its *preheminence*, drawn from the English Text ὑπὲρ πάντων *Above* all things have Charity, or, if you think this Good greek but ill translated in this sence, take the same doctrine in indubitable words from St. *Paul Col.* 3. 14. Ἐπὶ πᾶσιν *Above all things put on Charity*; when it cannot be denied but the Apostle doth preach up the preheminence of this duty above all that went before.

Psal.133. And truly when I consider that holy *David* hath spent a
1 Cor.13. whole Psalm, and St. *Paul* a whole Chapter, upon no other subject then the *excellency* of this duty of Charity, I cannot thinke my selfe able to perform the same work in any Compe-

tent

tent measure in a small part of a Sermon; yet since it is fallen in our way, according to my time and talent, I shall shew you the *prehemінence* of this duty above all others in these *Foure* particulars. In the *perfection* of its acts; In the *sweetness* of its nature; In the *Universality* of its Influence, and lastly, in the *Duration* of its Being.

First, it is above all in the *perfection* of its acts. *Now abideth Faith, Hope and Charity*, these three; *but the greatest of these is Charity*; The advancement of this grace will prove a very easie worke if we can set it above Faith it selfe; and since the holy Ghost hath said it, we must make it good, and that in *two* particulars. *First*, Charity is greater then Faith, in respect to the *Efficacy* of their acts, For Charity gives *life*, at least it gives *activity* to Faith, and therefore is greater; read this assertion at large verified by *St. Iames* Chap. 2. from the 14. to the 23. *Faith without works is dead*; if *a brother be naked or want Food*, and ye *say be be warmed and filled but give him nothing, what doth this profit? Faith is dead if it be alone; for the Devils beleeve and tremble*, and v. 22. *he* saith that *Abrahams faith wrought by works*, and by *works faith is perfect*: And *St. Paul* makes up *St. Iames's* argument by the specification of those works which actuate faith. *Faith worketh by Love Gal.* 5. 6. It is love then which actuates, yea, which in *St. Iames* his phrase, *perfects* faith; thus Charity is greater then Faith: *first*, in the *efficacy* of their acts, it actuates, it perfects faith. *Secondly*, it is greater then faith in the *Absoluteness of its acts*, Faith *qua talis* in its own nature implyeth *imperfection*, not only in matter of *degrees* (for so *Charity* also is imperfect in this life;) but even in its own *kinde*; the most perfect act of Faith, if it be *but* Faith, hath this imperfection in it, to wit, the *Absence* of the object. For saith the Apostle, *It is of things not seen*; whereas charity is the grace of union, and it is the caressing of the heart in the actual Fruition of the object, and therefore is perfect in its own *kinde*; For which reason it abideth and Faileth not with Faith hope and other imperfect graces, which by reason of their imperfections, are unfit for Heaven without a charge; as also are all

1 Cor. 13. 13.

Heb. 11. 1.

those:

those that imply *misery* in others, such as pitty and compassion, &c. which in the very natures of their acts, forespeak themselves unfit for that state where there is Fulness of joy for ever more; whereas this grace of Charity abideth the same in Heaven as on Earth in its *kinde*, (though in degrees it is more perfect) and for no other reason, but because the acts and operations of Charity, even as they are performed here on Earth, do not imply any Essential inherent imperfections, which as you see, are to be found in all other graces: Therefore Charity is *Above* all others, *First* in the *Perfection* of its *Acts*.

Secondly, In the *sweetness* of its *Nature*, There is no duty of Religion that comes so neer to the delight of nature, as the duty of Brotherly love; as man is naturally a *sociable* creature, so consequently must he be as naturally a *loving and affectionate* creature, Love being the congregating and uniting passion of the soule, whereby the object is drawn close to the affection: so that Love simply in its own nature is the most consonant to our natural inclination, even above all other duties of Religion whatsoever, which the *Psalmist* plainly intimates when he cryes out Psal. 133. 1. *Behold how pleasant a thing it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*: Faith, repentance, self-denial, taking up the Cross, and all duties of mortification, instead of pleasure hold, in their very acts rather a displeasure and contrariety to nature; but how pleasant is unity among Brethren? wherefore above all other. *Secondly* in the sweetness of its *nature*.

Thirdly in the *Universality* of its influence, Charity transfuseth an universal vertue through the whole body of Gods worship and service in all the duties of the same, if they are performed as they ought to be: whereas other duties are particularly stated within their own limits. *Meditation* is a distinct duty from *hearing* of the word preached; and *Hearing* is a distinct duty from *prayer*; and *Receiving* the *Sacraments* distinct from both; but the duties of Love and Charity must have an universal influence in all. *Charity* being among the Graces much as *Justice* among the vertues: 1 *Cor.* 16. 14. The Apostle particularly exhorts the Corinthians to

Watchfulness,

Watchfulness, to *magnanimity*, to *Constancy*, in thier particular and distinct natures: but v. 14. he enjoyns Charity as an *Universal* requisite to the performance of these and all other *particular* duties whatsoever: *Watch ye, Stand fast in the Faith*, quit *you like men*, be *strong*, here are the particular duties; and in the next *verse Let all things be done with Charity*: like as it was under the law, an abundance of sacrifices there were of proper and distinct kindes, some of *Sheep*, some of *Bullocks*, some of *Lambs*; some for *peace*, some for *praise*,, some for *sin*; But all were kindled by the same holy fire, that was kept alwayes alive upon the holy Altar, for these several services; And even thus is it with the grace of Charity, it is that holy Fire which is ever kept alive in the Altar of the good mans heart, whereby he enkindles all his evangelical sacrifices which he offereth unto God; and therefore he that cometh with his gift to the altar, before he be reconciled to his Brother, in effect expects to offer a burnt offering without Fire; let him leave his gift; *First* Fetch this Fire, then let him kindle his Sacrifice, and perform the whole state and series of the duties of Religion, quickned with this common Catholick grace: which is to the other inferior duties of Gods worship, as the Sun is to the lesser Stars, though they have a native beauty and light of their own, yet do they all borrow the chiefest part of their lustre from this great ruling light of Charity. I need no better evidence of the universal influence of this grace, then the resemblance the holy Psalmist gives us *Psal.* 133. 2. where he tells, us that the love of Brethren is that *precious ointment* of *Aaron, which was poured upon his head, and ran down to his beard*, and *descended even to the skirts of his garments*, and so gave a pleasant tincture to every part of *Aaron* from head to foot: this diffusive ointment, saith he, is the *love and unity* of *Brethren*, which gives a tincture to all the parts of *Aaron*, to the whole body of *Gods worship* and service in all the duties of the same; not only to the participation of the great mysteries of our salvation in the Sacraments, which is the *Head* of *Aaron*; but also to every quotidian meditation upon God, to every frequent admonition of our Brother, the *skirts of Aaron*, even all must smell of this precious ointment of chari-

ty; wherefore it is above all others thirdly in the *universality* of its *Influence*.

Fourthly, In the *Duration* of its *being*, 1 *Cor.*13.8. *Charity never faileth, but whether there be prophesies, they shal fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away:* All other both *Gifts* and *Graces* must suffer a kinde of dissolution before we can enter heaven; but charity never dies, continuing as immortal as the soul that bears it: Indeed we may say of the duration of all other graces, as *S. Paul* spake of Mans *Mortality*, 1 *Cor.*15.51. *They shall not all die*, but *they shall be changed: Faith* shall be changed into *vision*, and *Hope* into *fruition*, *Patience* into *triumph*, *Penitence* into *praise*, &c. But *Charity* shall not so much as undergo this *change*; for it shall be the same in its kinde, though greater in its degree, in Heaven as it was on the Earth; so that it is a grace that receives *Enochs Translation*, without *S. Pauls Mutation*, passing into Heaven with us, and that without a change; no other graces do the like, and therefore *above* all others *lastly* in the *Duration* of its being.

You have seen the *Precedence* and also the *Preheminence* of charity, and in both the *Importance*, which is the *second part* of the Text from these words Πρὸ πάντων, *Before or above* all *things have charity*.

Come we now to the *Third part*, to wit, from the *Importance* to the *Complexion* or *Temperature* of the duty, in these words Ἀγάπην ἐκτενῆ translated *fervent* charity. It is not every flash of *friendship*, nor formal fit of *courtship* that is the charity extold by the Apostle, but it is ἀγάπη ἐκτενὴς fervent charity; which if we will take the advantages of the original without restraining our selves to the translation, we shall finde it as fit a word for our purpose, as can be found in the whole treasury of the Greek tongue: For it is *one* word, which, in the force of the several constructions it usually bears, gives us all the most requisite Dimensions or Admeasurements of Christian charity, to wit, both the *Extension*, *Intention*, and *protension*, ἐκτενὴς being used frequently in all three sences, as you shall see in the pursuit of each particular. 1. It intimates that Christian charity must be an extended charity towards

all

all for the *Bredth* of it. 2. That it must be an Intended or intense, or fervent charity proceeding from the sincerity of the heart, for the *depth* of it. 3. That it must be also a protended (*i.e.*) a lasting, a continued charity, not discouraged by any personal disobligements whatsoever, for the *Length* of it: as if Providence had fitted it only for this place, as if it were an *Adjective* made on purpose for this *substantive*.

First, if our charity must be ἀγάπη ἐκτενὴς, then it must be an *extended and an enlarged* charity even unto all, which we must needs confesse is the native and most literal construction of the word, which is originally compounded of Ἐκ and τείνω, signifying literally to *Extend or enlarge in breadth*, or to stretch forth to a great distance; in this sence is it used by S. *Luke* Acts 26.1. Then *Paul* ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα stretched forth the hand, and answered for himself: so is it likewise used by S. *Matth.* 14.31. suddenly Christ ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα stretching forth his hand, &c. saved *Peter* from sinking: Answerably therefore if true charity is ἀγάπη ἐκτενὴς, it must be a stretched forth and an enlarged charity. "*True Christian charity therefore enjoyned in this Apostolick precept is not a limited nor inclosed affection, impaled onely within the bounds of narrow relations either natural or contracted, as of Countrey, Friends, Benefactors, Kindred, or the like; but it is a Campaigne and a Common Grace, knowing no other bounds or limits but the universal relation in which all men stand towards God, who is the common cause in whom all concenter and agree:* and this is ἀγάπη ἐκτενὴς *extended charity*, practised to the full by our Saviour Christ, who set us copies as well as imposed precepts, and taught us by his Example as well as by his Doctrine; in whose life I know not any generation of people whom he excluded from the charity of his miracles: The *Centurion*, a Roman; the *Woman* at the *Well-head*, a Samaritan; the *Woman*, that interceded for her Daughter, a Dog a Syrophenician; the *churlish Gadarene*; the *scandalous* Publican; the *Lepers*; the *Demonaick*; the *Deaf*; the *Dumb*; the *Blinde*; the *Lame*; the *Sick*; and the *Dead*: all nations, sexes, conditions, and ages of Men, did partake of the benefit of his *extended* love, giving in these outward Eviden-

ces, Symbols of the love of Christ spiritually to mankinde in the salvation of their souls; *Tit.2.11. The love of God hath appeared unto* all *men:* and Chap.3. verse 4. *The love of Christ towards* Man *appeared*: he was (as *Themistius* saith a good King should be) neither φιλομαχέδιν Θ, nor φιλοῤῥωμαί Θ, but φιλάνθρωπος; not a friend onely to the house of *David*, nor yet to the house of *Abraham*, not to the Jewes his Brethren after the flesh, these are too narrow relations for such a boundlesse charity; but his Love towards *Man* appeared, which is a specifick denomination applicable to Turks, to Negroes, to Indians, to all that own the title of Reasonable Creatures; even to all the Genealogies of our Ancestors from *Adam* to this Age, that now lie buried in the land of forgetfulnesse, for Christ is the ὁ ἦν, the God that *was*; to all that now breathe upon the face of Gods earth; for Christ is the ὁ ὤν, the God that *is*; and to all that ever shall be to the last dissolution, for he is the ὁ ἐρχόμενος Θ, the God that is *to come*.

Rev.1.4.

But Secondly, his *precept* of Love is as *large* as his *practise*. Its true, the tenor of the Law in S. *Luke* 10.27. is, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*, as if Strangers and Enemies were excluded from the Obligation of this Precept: but S. *Paul*, the best Interpreter of Christs Doctrine, rehearsing the same Law, Rom.13.8. saith, Ὁ ἀγαπῶν τὸν ἕτερον νόμον πεπλήρωκε, *He that loveth* another *hath fulfilled the Law*: it is not Ἑταῖρον but Ἕτερον, not our Friend, our Companion, or Familiar, but he that loveth *another* man, any Man. It is not private interest, party, nor faction, that can impound Christian charity within any particular state or condition of Men, but it loves all in the capacity of God and Religion, swallowing up into its immensity all the lesser and limited chanels of love, arising from the narrow endeerments of nature or conversation, such as are Kindred, Friends, or Benefactors, &c.

But Thirdly, if you would see both *Doctrine*, and *Practice* in one instance, you may finde them in *Matth.*12. where when it was told Christ that his *Mother* and *Brethen* after the flesh *stood without to speak with him*, he answered vers 48. *Who is my mother, and who are my brethren?* alas you speak after

after the manner of Men, and make an *enclosure* of that affection within the limits of Nature, which I intend should be a Campaigne and a Common Field even for the benefit of the whole world, through the universality of grace; and therefore ἐκτείνας τὴν χεῖρα, saith the Text, yes and τὴν ἀγάπην also, he stretched forth both his *Hand* and his *Heart* towards his *Disciples* (saith S. *Matthew*,) towards the whole *multitude*, saith S. *Mark*,) and said even of this multitude, *Behold my mother and brethren:* why and how so? *Whosoever doth the will of my Father, the same is my Brother, Sister, and Mother*; there is little question but in that croud there were some of very different and remote conditions, and perhaps of different climates; seldom a croud in Christs time, but was such, by reason of the mixture of other nations with the Jewes, under the Regency of the Romans: yet whether they were Barbarian or Scythian, Bond, or Free, Jew or Gentile, Christ is all *to*, and *in* all: That spiritual relation in which they stand to his heavenly Father, by an upright life and due obedience to his will, adopts Christians of the most remote conditions to be his Mother and Brethren. There being very little question but Christs ὅστις in this place is of the same latitude as S. *Pauls* Ἕτερος. Wherefore if we will either obey the command of Christ; or imitate the *practice* of Christ, our charity must be universal and extended according to his who hath required us to love one another, even as he hath loved us. We read of somewhat a strange argument which the Apostle useth to the *Hebr.*13.2. to perswade them to a common hospitality of strangers; *For thereby* (he saith) *some have entertained Angels unawares:* If we consider our neighbour in that condition he stands towards God, even so all Men are strangers unto us; and unlesse we had the perusal of the *Book of Life*, we know not who will make a vessel of *Honour*, or who of *Dishonour*. Let me therefore exhort you in the Apostles phrase to entertain into your affections all those that are so much strangers to you, lest you chance to shut out of your charity one of Gods *Angels*, one that hath the secret signature of *election* upon him; and then Christ come at last to you, and say as to those unkinde and uncharitable

Col.3.11.

wretches

wretches in the Gospel, *Matth.25.45. In as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me:* Therefore let your charity be in the first place, an *extended* charity.

Secondly, if it be ἀγάπη ἐκτενὴς, it must be a deep, intense, and *fervent* charity, such as proceeds from the very bottom of the *Heart*, and the integrity of *our Souls*; (which being the main part of the duty, and withal the expresse language of the Text, it will be necessary that we insist longer upon this construction, then upon either of the other two.) I confesse I finde this word not often used in this sence elsewhere in holy Writ: But ἐκτενῶς, which is an Adverb of the same Verb is frequent in Greek Authors, signifying *Impensè, vehementer & totis viribus*; to do a thing *Earnestly, Vehemently*, and with *utmost Industry*, which is in effect the same with *Fervently* in the Text; expressing that true zeal and sincerity of affection which one Man ought to have to another. "*True (christian* "*charity is neither a cold neighbourhood, nor a formal courtship,* "*nor a vainglorious beneficence; but it is the intire and zealous* "*affection of the very soul.* Expressed by S. *Paul, Rom.*12.10. in a phrase beyond the reach of our English tongue, Τῇ φιλαδελφίᾳ φιλόστοργοι, where he requires that one Man should love another with the same στοργὴ, with the same *natural tenderness*, as a Mother loves the childe of her own bowels, which in our translation we call a *kinde affection, Be kindly affectioned one towards another with brotherly love:* which though it fall far short of the Original, yet speaks enough to tell us that the *Heart* is the principal Requisite in charity; and that that Philosophers compassion was no better then Stoical hypocrisie, who whilest he allowed his friend to contribute sad lookes and language to the distressed and miserable, restrains him with a Πρόσεχε μὴ τοῦτο, μὴ κἀκεῖθεν συνεπτεινάξῃς, *Be sure take heed lest thou suffer any inward compassion for him*; turning this most tender affection of the heart, into a formal counterfeit compliance of the outward behaviour, clear contrary to the nature of Christianity, which is of such a pure and spiritual extraction, that although we read of rewards upon the performance of no duties more, then for works of *Charity*, such as relieving the oppressed, feeding the hungry, clothing the

Epictet.

naked, bewailing and comforting the miserable, and other the *external* acts of charity; yet is neither this, nor any other duties of Religion accepted or rewarded by God for their own sakes, but only according to the inward affection of the soul from whence they proceed.

Indeed a man might think, that if there were any outward acts of obedience accepted for themselves, they should be the outward offices of *Charity* towards our Brethren, and the plausible reason might be; Because how ever they may proceed from a *wrong Ayme*, yet they do unfallibly hit the *right marke*, and fulfil the immediate, and indeed, the principal end of those acts, and that is, the relief of our needy Brother: For doubtless the *Bread* and *Wine* and *Sheep* &c. would have yielded David and his men as wholsome refreshment had they come from the hand of *Churlish Nabal*, as 1 Sam. 25. 18. they did coming as the present of a chearful and *generous Abigail*. So that *operative Charity* consisting in that order it beares to our *Brothers* good; if our needy brother be benefited by the *outward act*, it is accidental as to the *End* of *Charity*, whether that act proceed from an inward principle of *Grace*, *Nature*, or *Lust*; wherefore, I say, if any outward acts of obedience were of themselves acceptable, one might think they should be those of *Charity* towards our *Brother*: For as for those of piety and worship towards God; such as *Watching*, *Fasting*, *Praying*, *Hearing*, *Communicating*: and the like external acts of Religion, the intire order that these hold in the state of our obedience is only to spiritual ends and purposes; and therefore although we are required to worship and glorifie God in our *Bodies* and in our *Spirits* which are Gods. 1 *Cor.* 6. 20. Yet God himself being a most *pure spirit*, unto which all these outward acts of piety and worship tend, and in whom they fully *End*; it is therefore very improper to the nature of them, that they should be accepted in and for themselves, but only as they derive a devout influence from, and have an original dependance upon the sincerity and zeal of the Inner man, and the spirit from whence they proceed. For doubtless that argument of our Saviour drawen from the nature of that God we serve *Joh.* 4.

 is unanſwerable when he ſaith, *That God is a Spirit, and therefore muſt be worſhipped in Spirit and in Truth*, Wherefore, to return to our purpoſe, although Relief and Brotherly ſupply is the whole End of *operative Charity* conſiſting in the outward offices of Love, which is ſufficiently ſatisfied if thoſe offices are performed, yet if we take the duty of Chriſtian charity in the *whole ſtate* of the duty, and not by parcel-meals, we ſhall finde that *operative charity* is not the half part of that required in this precept of Love; for this, as all duties of the *Second Table*, hath a double reſpiciency in it, the immediate reſpect is towards our *Neighbour*, the ultimate reſpect is towards *God*: which is a conſideration that makes the duties of love to become offices of piety to God as well as of charity to our Brother.

Now looking upon this duty in its *immediate* reſpect to our Neighbour, I confeſſe if *Gods* Law were to be conſidered no otherwiſe then the *Statute Lawes* of the Land, which for the ſubſtance of the precepts forbid the very ſame particulars as are expreſſed in the *Second Table*, as *Rebellion*, *Murder*, *Theft*, *Adultery*, *Falſe witneſſe*, *&c.* and enjoynes alſo the ſame duties of Juſtice and Charity to our Brethren: Now, I ſay, if *Gods* Law reached no further then *Mans*, operative charity would fulfil the whole duty, Mans Law looking no farther then to the reſtraining or enjoyning the outward act.

But ſeeing Gods Law ought to be conſidered, as the firſt Law written in our hearts, and the Law of Nature as well as of God; in this conſideration the *inward principle* of thoſe offices of love from whom they proceed, muſt be conſidered as well as the external acts themſelves; for as much as God at the firſt did ſo abſolutely and to all purpoſes inſtruct and furniſh our natures, that look whatever outward duty he required at our hands, he placed an anſwerable principle in our hearts to incline and carry us through the performance of that work required of us; as conceiving it to be too ſevere a uſage of man, above all other works of the creation beſides, to require him to do that duty, unto which God had not firſt imprinted a propenſion in his nature, as to command him the outward of-

fices

fices of *Society* and *Hospitality* without giving him the inward principle of love; or the duties of *succouring* the distressed, or *relieving* the needy, without the inward principle of pitty and commiseration, and so in all the rest.

And truly, though I deny not, but many a good almes hath been given for vainglory, to be seen of Men; many through the importunity of our needy Brother; and many through custome; yet these are not *natural*, but *equivocal* productions of charity; much like the generations of *Frogs* and *Flies*, and other Insects, which are often ingendred of putrefaction, and not from their own kindes, which we call *Imperfect Generations* in Philosophy: Even such *unkindly productions* are such sorts of good works in the Law of Charity, that come besides the common order of Nature: God therefore originally not only enjoyning *the Act*, but administring the proper *and univocal principle* of that act in the spirit of Man: By the Law of Nature rectified, we are required to take both into consideration; and not onely to be *hospitable* to our Brethren, but also to *love* them; not onely to *help* the miserable, but also to *pity* and compassionate them; so that the inward fervency of the spirit in works of charity is necessary in the *first* place *Necessitate principii*, as Natures proper principle for such acts. 1.

But Secondly, if we look upon charity as reflecting upon *God*, we shall finde yet more cause why this fervency of the heart is requisite in this duty. Because in this capacity it is a duty *of piety*, as all other duties of Religion and worship are, which have their outward acts (as I have said) purely in order to inward and spiritual purposes, and grateful onely as they proceed from sincere and spiritual principles. Now that charity bears such a reflection upon God, and therefore becomes as it were a duty of the *First Table*, is intimated by the Wiseman *Prov.*14.31. where it is said, *That he that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker*; not only by his act of disobedience against the positive Law of God, who by adding to this duty his divine sanction, made that *moral* which was at first *natural*, whereby you see the Heart is likewise necessary in this duty. Secondly, *Necessitate præcepti*; but also reproach- 2.

 eth

eth his Maker, in respect to that order and relation in which they stand towards God, having a supreme interest in all men, but especially in the *poor* and *needy*, and of these chiefly in them, who together with their outward indigencies are poor in *spirit* also; of whom Christ saith, *Math.*25.40. *In as much as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.* Now if offices of love and charity to our Brethren be performed to God, and to Christ himself; we knowing whom we serve, know likewise our charity must be affectionate and fervent as well as operative, and that as you see

3. Thirdly *Necessitate medii*, as a proper means of service answerable to that *God* we *serve*.

Use 1. 1. Away then 1. With *Negative Friendships*, and *Cold Neighbourhoods*, the universal practice of this uncharitable Age, wherein Men think they discharge their duties sufficiently in this Law of Love, if they do *no* wrong, and offer *no* violence, and are *not* professed Enemies: alas, this is too cold a disposition for this hot climate of Love; true charity is a grace that puts the heart of a Christian into a fermentation, and a fervent working of the bowels upon our Brethren: for Love *leavens* the soul, as well as Malice, and there is a heat in both, only the one is by a fire from *Hell*, and the other from Heaven: But this cold indifferency hangs between these two fires, like the middle Region between Heaven and Earth, in a perpetual frost, having neither celestial grace enough to inkindle the kindly warmth of love; nor infernal malice, nor mischief enough, or at least not courage, or opportunity, or provocation enough, to blow up the fiery combustions of wrath and revenges. And yet with shame we may speak it if we look into City and Countrey, we shall finde this degree of charity to be all that is practised in obedience to the whole precept of love; Nothing but a bare *Non-enmity*, and a *Negative friendship*, *not fighting*, *not revenging*, *not provoking*, *not injuring*, and this is all: which is a disposition that gives to Man but one remove from Wolves, and Beares, for we cannot love one minute or scruple lesse then this degree, but we must degenerate into plain Savages, and exercise profest acts of cruelty and hostility one against another. And yet we

think

think, if we can speak in the Pharisees dialect, *Not* an *Extortioner*, *not* a *Murderer*, *not* an *Enemy*, we shall be justified in this law of love, and that we are friends sufficient to our Brethren.

Which is the more to be lamented, because it seems to be not onely a *defect* in our *practice*, but also an *error* of our *judgements*, as appears by our behaviour in most solemn and sacred severities, to wit, in those great administrations of Religion which call for an exact view and examination of every Mans soul, such as are the holy Sacraments: Wherein Men do imploy all their spiritual labour to approve their *Faith* to be lively and efficacious, and their *repentance* to be truly contrite and humble; their mortifications to be truly *mental* in subduing their lusts, and not only in disfiguring their faces, and using corporal severities. But in this spiritual surveigh, when they consider themselves in this duty of charity; perhaps if they are at open defiance and professed variance with any Man, they will think it fit to skin over this festering sore with a false formal reconciliation; but if you examine their charity as to the rest of their Brethren, they'l say, "*They bear them no ill will, they never did them any injuries or* "*wrongs either in person, goods, or good names, they never med-* "*led nor made with them, and they are enemies to no Man living*; and this is the cold negative account they give of their duty towards their Brother, whom God commands them to love with as fervent an affection as they *love themselves*: whereas if they should be thus negative in the accounts of their other graces, instead of coming with their *wedding garments* to *Gods Table*, they would come *stark naked*. If thy *Faith* should be onely a belief, that thou shouldest be saved, *not* by *Baal*, *not* by the Idols of the *Heathen*, *not* by the *Turks Mahomet*, *not* by the Jewes *Talmud*, *not* by the Papists *Legends* and *Traditions*: And thy *Repentance* should be only a temporary *forbearance* of the acts of sin, a *not being* drunk, or *not* swearing, or *not* stealing, or the like. But whilest thou art sufficiently convinced in thy judgement, that thy *faith should* be *positive* and *lively*, and a *firm belief* that Jesus Christ is thy Saviour, relying with a bold and lively affiance of thy heart, upon his promises for life and salvation: and also that thy *re-*

pentance should be truly *humble* and *contrite*, both a *compunction* and sorrow of soul for sins past, and a *pious purpose* of the heart never to commit the like sins again: yet in this fervent duty of *charity*, if thou canst say I have done *no* Man wrong, and bear them *no* ill will, and am an *enemy* to *no* man living, thou thinkest in thy own judgement that thou hast said enough: we may call this indeed a *putting off* of *malice* and *professed enmity*: But it is not, as the Apostle requires *Col.* 3.14. A *putting on of charity*; but it is a miserable and a forlorn *denudation* of the soul, and a stripping it stark naked: whereas charity, if it be well put on, is a Garment that keeps him *warm* that wears it; that heart shall never feel the *chilnesse* of *negative friendships*, that is truly furnished with the grace of *fervent* charity.

2. Secondly, away with the false and deceitful *charity of the Tongue*, practised in Court and Countrey, by all who are more liberal of *good words*, then either of *good wishes* or *good deeds*, who when their brethrens necessities require either their *purse*, *counsel*, *favour*, or *interest* to help them out of their present distresse; presently (in the Apostles phrase) they
1 Cor. 13. 1. fall to tuning their *tinkling Cymbals*, and give them a liberal *acknowledgement* of all former favours, and how joyful they should be to make a grateful return of so much kindnesse, and professe their readinesse to do them any service that lies within the compasse of their powers; with much more of this *French charity*. But when it comes to the point *of assistance*, they begin to bewail their unhappinesse that they are not able to serve them in this one request, either their *money* is out of the way, or their *favour* is eclipsed and *interest* abated, or twenty pretended *occasions* of importance draw them another way: and thus they stretch out the expectation of their needy brethren, with nothing but the winde of fair words, and leave them as helplesse as they found them: Nay, perhaps at that very time are contriving and meditating secret stratagems, how to *over-reach* or *undermine* them in those very affairs in which they craved their assistance: which is no new piece of Courtship among great ones, that use more *flatteries* to their friends then *Fucasses* to their faces; whereas indeed

the

the one can be call'd no more true *charity*, then the other true *beauty*: Holy *David* was troubled with such Courtiers, *Psal.* 55.13. *Mine equal, my guide, my acquaintance---His words were smoother then butter, and softer then oyl, when war was in his heart*, verse 21. Which practice is so far from *fervent charity*, that 'tis *fervent malice* and *fervent envy*.

Others there are, guilty of a more harmlesse sort of charity, that will give nothing but the cheap almes of good words to him that asks & needs out of the chargeablenes of the duty: like S. *James's Eleemosynaries*, *James* 2.16. that say to the *naked* and to the *hungry*, *be ye warmed, and be ye filled*, but neither give *food* nor *raiment*; alasse what do words profit them? Breath indeed is a *cheap dole*, but 'tis *cold* and *comfortlesse*, it may *cool* the naked, but it cannot *clothe* him: and winde may *swell* the hungry with a false expectation, but it cannot *feed* him. There are no words that perform the ends of charity, but his, who spake *the word* and Israel *had bread* from Heaven, and *garments* that were not old by wearing; even the word of him that *feeds the Ravens*, and *clothes the Lilies*, by whose Word we live more then *by our own bread*, *Matth.*4.4. *Let us therefore love not in word nor in tongue, but in deed, and in truth*, 1 *John* 3.18. *In deed*, that our charity may be *profitable*, and in *truth*, that our charity may be *sincere* and *fervent*. Therefore away in the second place with the comfortlesse *charity of the Tongue*.

Thirdly, if true charity must be fervent, Away with the 31.
extended charity of *the Hand*, the charity of *Scribes* and *Pharisees* that give onely *to be seen of men*; who although many a poor soul may have been *refreshed* by their *Almes*, & *clothed* in their *Liveries*, and *recovered* by their *Physick*; yet at the last account they will find, they had as good never have given at all, as have given at the *sound of a Trumpet* for vain-glory and applause, without any true sincere charity in their soules. ar be it from me to speak against the poor mans interest; od knowes he lives in *hunger* and *rags*, notwithstanding all e *incomes* of *charity*, yea, though we take in those also which *portunity* or *custome*, which *pride* or *vain-glory*, or any other harisaical *motives* of beneficence may bring into the poor

mans

mans Store-house. I onely tell the rich the best way to husband their charity, and that they may at the same rate, purchase to their own hearts and consciences, the true satisfaction of *Christian and religious benefactours*, as they now give to buy onely the ayre of a *good name* and the vain reputation of *munificence*. It is but onely altering the *disposition* of the *Heart*, the *Hand* hath already learn'd its duty. And unlesse the heart be changed, you may call it *vanity* and *ostentation*, but you exceedingly wrong this sweet and spiritual grace of Christianity to call it *charity*.

And if this seems a *mystery* and a *solœcisme* against the common dialect of the World, to deny *almes-deeds* to be *charity*, go and learn the meaning of *S. Pauls* Paradox, 1 *Cor.* 13.3. *That a man may give all his goods to feed the poor, and yet have no charity:* Or what think you of *Jaels* kindnesse to *Sisera?* who brings her *Milk* and *Butter* in a *Lordly Dish* to the faint and the weary Captain, and gives him house and harbour, entertainment, and lodging; if we did not see the *Nail* and the *Hammer* we should be ready enough to call this *pure compassion:* but when we read of the *fatal effect* of this kindnesse, how should we wrong the integrity and simplicity of this lovely grace, to give to such usages the name of *charity?* And when I consider how many *Jaels favours* are *bestowed* in the World, only upon a designe to work in Men the greater confidence of their fidelity, that so they might destroy with the greater assurance and advantage, I cannot but think it high time to preach up the charity of the *heart:* and to tell you that the liberality of the *hand alone*, is nothing but the *price* of *hypocrisie*, nay, perhaps, it may be the very *pretexts* of *treachery*, a piece of charity which the Devil practised, who had good nature enough to offer Christ the *glories* of the world, when he suffered *hunger* and *solitude* in the waste wildernesse: and the *same foul* spirit that once thought to make *Job curse God* by *Taking*, now tryes whether he can make our Saviour *blesse* the Devil by *Giving*. And even such, and no other, are the deceitful charities of the *Hand*, where the *Heart* is not sincere and upright: and thus much for *reprehension*.

Judges 4.

Iob 1.11. Chap. 2.5.

Use 2. Now in one word of *Exhortation*; if Charity must bee *fervent*

vent, Bee yee then φιλόστοργοι, *kindly affectioned one towards another with brotherly love*; rest not in the cold formalities of *vulgar freindship*, nor in the outward *complements*, or uncertain offices *of Love*; but let your hearts erne over your brothers necessities, and *fellow-feele* in all their miseries: doutless Religion makes Charity a very secret and mentall grace, when it's call'd in Scripture by the name of *Bowels*, Col. 3. 12. *Put on therefore* (as *the elect of God holy and beloved*,) *Bowels of mercy*: and in another place, to shew us whence every outward act of Charity should proceed, the denyall of assistance to the poor and needy is called *a shutting up of our Bowels*. 1 Joh. 3. 17. *Whoso hath this worlds good, and seeth his brother hath need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?* the holy Ghost in this place takes no notice of any of those *equivocal productions* of Charity, which may proceed either from *custome*, *importunity* or *vain-glory*; accounting no ourward office of Love worth naming, but what proceeds from *open bowels*, that is, from a Christian *tender compassion* of our Brethrens needs. If yee wil but change the name and call *Charity*, *Love*; you will soon see the necessity of the *heart* in this duty: love being an affection ever naturally fixed and seated there; and it is as improper for men to *love* with their *hands*, or to *love* with their *tongues*, as it is to *see* with their *ears*, or *hear* with their *eyes*. Which *secret* and *sacred* seat of this divine grace, the holy Apostle evidently discovers, 1 *Tim.* 1. 5. Where hee calls it Charity out of a *pure heart*, a *good Conscience* and *faith unfained*: Outward offices of love, where they are found alone, are but Charity's out of *uncleane hands*, but the true Apostolical Christian Love, is Charity out of a *prue heart*: Excellently expressed by God, *Isa.* 58. 10. where he calls it a *drawing out of the soul to the hungry*; it is not so much a drawing out of our treasures, our *cruise*, and our *Barrel*, but wee must set our souls on broach, and draw out even the secret compassions, and ernings of our own bowells over the necessities of our needy brethren; and by this means how slender and narrow soever thy *share* is of the good things of this World, thou shalt discover a rich *fountain* of Love, sufficient to answer all the *necessities* of thy brethren; for where-

Rom. 12.

as *treasures* may bee exhausted, and the *cruise* may fail, and the *barrell* cease, but the overflowing Fountain of *Christian pitty*, and compassion in the good mans heart, shall never bee drawn dry; for so saith the Text, v. 11. *If thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, then thou shalt bee as a spring of waters, whose waters fayl not*: which leads us to the last construction of Ἀγάπη ἐκλεινὴς *protended* or lasting Charity.

Which is the third *dimension* of this grace, to wit, the *length* of it. True Christian Charity to our brother, doth not live and die with our own ends and interests, it doth not last till our turnes are served, nor cease upon any personal indignities or disobligements, but it is in the Philosophers phrase, *pertinax bonitas*, a grace, which as no worldly inducements *wrought* in us, so no worldly discouragement, can *blast*, but it is Ἀγάπη ἐκλεινὴς, *lasting* and *perpetual* Charity; which construction of the word, I need not crave aide of profane Authors to justifie, though *Suidas* and others frequently use it for *jugis* and *assiduus*; but I can give you express Scripture for it, *Act.* 12. 5. *Peter* was kept in Prison, and Προσευχὴ ἐκλεινὴς ἦν γινομένη, &c. it is not translated *fervent* prayer, But *Prayer without ceasing was made by the Church to God for him*: and if προσευχὴ ἐκτενὴς bee *Prayer without ceasing*, surely Ἀγάπη ἐκλεινὴς may bee translated, as well, *Charity without ceasing*, not concluded by our own interests or our Brothers discourtesies, but it ought to bee a perpetual and a durable duty, like our Saviours, who when he loves us once, hee loves us unto the end, *Ioh.* 13. 10.

Senec.

1. The cause of all the dissolutions or corruptions of *natural bodies* ariseth from the fighting and victory of *contrary principles*, which is the reason we say in Philosophy, That God who is a *simple being* must needs be *Eternal*. Now though *natural* charity like *natural* bodies, is destroy'd by contraries, by an *unworthy reproach*, or an *ungrateful return*, or an *uncivil affront*, or any other personal injury; yet that charity which is a Christian grace, is exercis'd and improv'd by such tryals; it can take *pleasure in reproaches*, and *joy in persecutions*; it can *love enemies*, and *blesse persecutors*, and *pray for the spightful and malicious*. πάντα στέγει, πάντα ὑπομένει, and therefore the next word is οὐδέποτε ἐκπίπτει, 1 *Cor.* 13. 7, 8. It *suffereth All things*,

things, it endureth All things, and therefore it followes, *Charity never faileth:* and how can we imagine that any thing can destroy that which even *Enemies improve.*

But secondly God and Nature seem to have conspired to make this grace perpetuall; In differences of *Religions* we say *Nulli sunt taliter discrepantes, &c.* No Men are of such different opinions, but they agree in some common principles, out of which arguments may be drawn to bring all at last to unity of judgement in the same truth. Thus the *Christian* and the *Atheist* agree in the Book of Nature; the *Christian* and the *Jew* in the Old Testament, and the Reformed *Christian* and the *Papist* in the New Testament: and so long as there is a *Third thing* wherein they agree, there is at least a *possibility* of union. Even after the same manner hath God provided for the working and *perpetuating* the unity of affections by this grace of charity; in as much as there cannot be any sort of people of such an *alienated estate from us*, but there is some *Relation* in which they agree with us, and so long as any relation *continues*, even so long our love must *endure.* 2.

But thou wilt say 'tis true, such or such an one was once my Brother in *sincere* and holy *profession*, but now he hath broke that relation and turned *prophane* and *dissolute:* yet love him still, for he is thy *Brother-Protestant:* Nay, but he hath further Apostatiz'd even to *Papal superstition*, and so hath broken that Relation also; yes, love him still, for he is yet thy *Brother-Christian:* Nay, but he is as bad as bad may be, he is degenerated into plain *Atheism*, and so hath violated all Relations; yes, love him still, for he is yet thy *Brother-Creature*, nay, thy *Brother-Man*, and hath more of the lineaments and image of God in him then all the unreasonable creatures of the world besides; and whatsoever is *of God* in him, even in that he is thy Brother, and in that the *fit Object* of thy charity.

This argument is excellently pursued by the Stoick, Πᾶν πρᾶγμα δύο ἔχει λαβάς, as every *thing*, so every *person* hath two *handles*, or two *capacities*; and if thy charity cannot lay hold on the one, yet may it easily on the other: as for instance, saith he, Thy *Brother hath injured thee*; in this case do not

take him in that relation as he hath *wronged thee*, αὐτὴν δὲ λαβὴν ἔχειν αὐτὸν ἡ φορητὴ, for thus (as we say in our English phrase) thou takest *the Pitcher by the wrong ear*, & thy Brother in that capacity in which thou canst *not bear him*, ἀλλὰ ἐκεῖθεν μᾶλλον, ὅτι ἀδελφὸς, ὅτι συσσίτιος, but rather under this relation as he is thy *Brother*, born of the *same* Mother, nursed with the *same* Milk, disciplined in the *same* family, ἡλικιώτης, &c. and so shalt thou receive him in that capacity in which thy *charity* will *well bear him*.

But Thirdly true charity is durable, because it hath the *discerning faculty* to distinguish between the *person* and the *fact*: so that all disobligements that are committed against love, are received, not as the effects of the *person*, but of his evil disposition, and proceeding not from his *nature*, but from the *corruption* of his nature: By which meanes all the provocations offered against the endeerments of charity, are received as *extrinsick* to that *relation* in which we love our Brother, and therefore can do no prejudice, nor offer any violence to the integrity or constancy of this affection.

Marc. Anton. 18. Sect. 11. Which was a consideration that served to pacifie the passions of a *Heathen Emperour* under the ungrateful and perverse usages of evil Men, when he considered that they had such depraved apprehensions of good and evil, of pleasures and grief, of honour and ignominy, of life and death, οὐδὲν θαυμαστὸν οὐδὲ ξένον μοι δόξει, ἐὰν τὰ δεῖνα ποιῇ, *I shall not wonder* (saith he) *nor think it a strange thing, if such a man commits such evil actions*, to wit, of injustice or violence, of intemperance or riot, of indulgence or *pusillanimity*, αἰσχρὸν ξενίζεσθαι, εἰ μὴ συκῆ σῦκα φέρει, Its *a shame for a man to be affected with wonder and amazement to see a Fig-tree bring forth figs*: καὶ ἰατρῷ δὲ καὶ κυβερνήτῃ, αἰσχρὸν ξενίζεσθαι εἰ πεπύρεκται ἄνος, ἢ εἰ ἀντίπνοια γέγονεν, and *'tis no lesse shame for a Physician or a Pilot to be amazed, when the one meets with Feavours, and the other with Storms*. And even thus if we do but consider that the disobligements of charity are no other then the necessary effects of Mens evil dispositions, and that such *corrupt affections* do as naturally bring forth such *fruit*, as the *Fig-tree* doth *Figs*, we shall finde little cause to be angry with our Brother: But like good

Physicians

Physicians, we shall respect and love the person whilest we seek to cure his *disease*: and like good *Pilots* in a Tempest, we shall not fret at the cause, but shall consider how to bear up our selves with meeknesse, wisdom, and security under it: and by this meanes our charity towards our Brethren will become very *constant* and *durable*. Which is much according to our Saviours doctrine, *Luke* 17.4. who teacheth us, that though our Brothers behaviour be never so unworthy towards us, yet we must continue to love and forgive, even as *often as he offends*. But if we once begin to stint our affection, and come to S. *Peters seven times*, *Matth.*18.21. it is an evident signe that our love is but *moral*, or rather *base* and *mercenary*; and not that *noble*, *free*, and *generous grace* of Christian charity in the Text, for that is Ἀγάπη ἐκτενὴς a *protended* and *a durable Grace*.

And thus have we finished the *Third* part of our Text, the *Qualification* of the duty, shewing you out of this one word ἐκτενὸς both the *extension*, *intension* and *protension* of Christian Charity.

The Fourth and Last particular, is the *Reciprocation* of the duty εἰς ἑαυτοὺς *Among your selves*: *The Love of Gods children is no single solitary act, but it consists in returnes and mutual commerces*: *Let us love one another*. 1 John 4. 7. *Bee kindly affectioned one to another*, Rom. 12.10. *This is the message that we heard from the beginning, that we should love one another*: 1 John 3.11. and so again v. 23. and indeed, where is not reciprocation required where ever the holy Ghost treats upon this subject of Love? The Apostle calls it *Col.*3.14. The *Bond of perfection*, even such a bond that knits the whole world together, and the world to God; with whom wee cannot say wherein a reciprocation is allowable, but only in Love; If hee *chastiseth* us, we are *humbled*, and *reformed*; if he loads us with his *blessings*, we *prayse* and *give thanks*; if hee *Threatens*, wee *tremble*; if he commands, we *obey*, ; But if he *loves* us, he desires nothing more, then that we should love him again. And as is our love to God, even such should bee our love to our neighbours, ever answered and cherished with gratefull reciprocal returnes: God hath not placed us in Societies, like *stones in a*

heap, where there is nothing but reservedness and confusion; but like coals upon a well-built Fire, not that we should retain a churlish, stupid and reserved morosity, to our brethren, and be no more communicative then senseless stones; but the *fervency* of our Charity should help to *enkindle* the same affection in our brethren, and so conspire into one *glorious flame* of divine love. Never say, that some men are not combustible by this holy fire, through the *churlishness* of their dispositions, and the uncompliance of their natures, whom no kindness can win, nor courtesies oblige; but follow *Seneca's* counsell, and try the event, *cinge ingratum Beneficiis, ut quocunq; se vertit memoriam tui fugiens, ibi te videat: besiege such a one round with favours and instances of Love*, if *one* courtesy wil not gain him, try a *Second*, and a *Third* and *fourth*, till thou hast so *beset him with the testimonies of thy love, that hee shall bee able to turn himself no wayes from thee, but even there hee shall find thee. Et vincit malos pertinax bonitas*, and thou shalt find that a *resolute obstinate* goodness, wil at last overcome the most perverse disposition: Methinks the holy Apostle gives us the very same encouragement under the same allusion, *Rom.* 12. 20. *If thy enemy hunger, feed him, if he thirst, give him drink, for in so doing, thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head* (that is.) in the sence of some Expositors, by multiplying acts of kindness upon thy adversary, thou shalt at the last enkindle in him the same kind affection towards thee, as thou hast towards him, and so mutually conspire in this holy *flame* of love.

But stay a while, methinks εἰς ἑαυτοὺς speaks more then a bare *reciprocation*; and rather exhorts us to an *Especial* and *Appropriate* reciprocation; Before, to wit, in the 3. verse, the Apostle spake of their conversation, in *times past among the Gentiles*, when *they walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of Wine, &c.* but here hee speaks of them, as received in to the faith of Christ, and admitted into the Church of God, and now bee sure you have Charity *among your selves*; *Sons* of the *same Father*, *members* of the *same Church*, *sprinkled* with the *same Baptisme*, *nurs'd* by the *same Ministery*, *sucking* the milke of the *same Word*, *sanctified* by the *same* Spirit, *saved* by the *same IESUS*; Bee sure have Charity *among your selves*: With the

world,

world, *Rom.* 12.18. It comes in with an *If it bee possible, and as much as in you lies:* but as to the holy Church of God, without any *If's* at all, bee sure, and *Above all things have Charity among your selves.*

Gods *Church and People* next and immediately under God himself, are the highest and most precious *interest* in the world; And as for the preservation and good of the *common beeing* of nature, the God of nature hath ordered, that every *single being*, shall upon occasion forsake its own proper *inclination* for the benefit of the *natural Universe:* so in a higher degree, to shew the prerogative of the *sacred body* of *Saints* in the region of *Religion*, God hath made even the *Lawes of common Nature*, to bee superseded for their *behoof* and service; Thus did hee when hee made the *Rock flow*, the *Sun return*, The *Sea divide*, the *fire not to burn*, the *Lions not to devour*, the *Viper not to sting*, and many instances of the like nature to shew us, how even by the institution and secret instinct from God, the mere sensitive and inanimate Creatures, do with all readiness forsake their *own natures* and inclinations, to love and serve the more sacred Interest of *Gods Church and People*: And shall the *Rock* give water to *Israel*? and shall wee, more *obdurate* then *Rocks*, deny a *cup of cold water* to one of *Christs Disciples*? Shall *the raging Seas* bee a wall and Bulwark of protection to *Gods People*? and shall *Torrentes Belial*, the flood of *wicked men* betray & *overwhelm them*? Shal the savage *Lions* be a guard to Gods *Daniels*? and shal more *cruel man* devour them? what a *strange, wild, savage* Creature is this *Beast* call'd *man*? that is less concern'd in the good and welfare of Gods Church and People, then either *Rocks*, or *Seas*, or *Lions*.

I find St. *Paul*, *Philem.* 12. call *Onesimus* (*Philemons servant*) his own *Bowels*, and even such is every Christian to his Christian Brother in the womb of *Gods Church*, and therefore uncharitable divisions among such brethren, are no better then spiritual *convulsions* in our *own Bowels*, which many times prove as *mortall*, as *painful Diseases*, even to the *ruine* of that Church that endures them: I am not come hither to bee *an unwelcom Prophet* in a day of *gladness*; I shall only tell you what I find in the Gospel, *Matt.* 24.12. where one *great signe* of the destruction

ſtruction of the Temple, is the *coldneſs* of Charity, *The love of many ſhall wax cold*; and truly, I know not a more ſad fatall proſage of the *danger* of Religion, and *downfall of a Church*, then the unnatulal fomenting of *Schiſmes*, *Factions*, and *animoſities between Brethren* of the *ſame faith* and *profeſſion*; when *theſe things come to paſs*, then *down goes the Temple*, The *ſincere profeſſion* of Godlineſs *troden under-foot*, and Religion made no other uſe of, but to *engage Parties*, and give *names to factions*.

Wherefore to conclude all, if wee bear *good will* to *Sion*, if wee tender the honor *of God*, or welfare of *Religion*, or the Peace and quiet of *our own ſouls*, let us purſue with all holy and devout Zeal, after this grace of Chriſtian Charity (*if it bee poſſible*) with *all men*; but above all things, *amongſt our ſelves*. And then what ever our corporal proviſions ſhall this day bee, it is this *holy Love* that will bee our *good Cheer*. Whereby our *Feaſt* wil deſerve the ſame Encomium which *Hugo de Sancto Victore* gives of the Feaſt of a good Conſcience; It wil bee *Titulus Religionis*, *Templum Solomonis*, *Ager Benedictionis*, *Hortus deliciarum*, *gaudium Angelorum*, *Arca fœderis*, *Aula Dei*, *& Habitaculum Spiritus Sancti*. *It will bee as the Title and proſpect of Religion*, *the Temple of Solomon*, *the Field of Bleſſing*, *the Garden of Delights*, *the joy of Angels*, *the Ark of the Covenant*, *the Court of God*, *and the habitation of the holy Spirit*; unto whom with the Father and the Son bee aſcribed all honor, glory and Praiſe, Obedience and adoration, now, and for evermore. *Amen*.

Hugo Victor. de Anima. lib. 3. cap. 11.

FINIS.

Errata.

P. 2. l. 18. for *fifth* r. *firſt*. Ib. l. 22. for *of* r. *in*. p. 11. l. 12. for *precedent* r. *precedence*. p. 14. l. 32. for *when* r. *where*. p. 15. l. ult. for *charge* r. *change*. p. 32. l. 2. for *but* r. *yet*.

e of
tall
en
ies
ese
o-
o-

n,
ne
d
ce
s.
s
y
-
e
-
l